



## FLEXIBLE WORK OPTIONS

POLICY:06.04.05

Effective Date: 09/01/99  
Date Last Revised: 03/03/08

**The following are responsible for the accuracy of the information contained in this document**

**Responsible Policy Administrator**  
Associate Vice Chancellor  
Human Resources

**Responsible Department**  
Human Resources

**Contact** (508) 856-5260

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### Policy Statement

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UMMS understands that in order for its employees to both maximize their productivity and have the time to meet their personal or family obligations, flexible solutions may be required. This policy is designed to facilitate the process of finding creative solutions to this issue. Additionally, UMMS values practices that make it an employer of choice for the best talent nationwide. The policy is designed to assist UMMS employees in maximizing the benefits associated with job flexibility while reducing the associated risks. The policy and supporting documents provide a framework for employees and managers to explore flexible work arrangements and to develop a plan for determining if a flexible arrangement will work in a specific situation.

Due to the GIC's definition of a benefit eligible employee as anyone working twenty hours or more, UMMS can not support job sharing in this policy. Flexible work arrangements that necessitate additional benefited head count will not be approved.

Flexible work arrangements that conflict with the objectives of UMMS or any applicable federal, state or local laws will not be permitted.

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### Reason for Policy

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UMMS recognizes that in order to attract, retain, and develop highly skilled employees there may be times when it is in the best interest of both UMMS and its employees to consider options beyond the traditional work locations and schedules. This flexibility must always be compatible with high performance and meeting the needs of UMMS' many business units. UMMS's commitment to this flexibility does not mean that every employee is entitled to a flexible work option. The nature of work and/or the needs of UMMS may preclude a flexible work arrangement. Flexibility is appropriate where both the needs of UMMS and the needs of the employee are met. However, a flexible work arrangement is not a right of employment and UMMS reserves the right to alter, amend or withdraw this policy at any time without notice.

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## Entities Affected By This Policy

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All employees, except faculty, residents and post-doctoral fellows may be considered for a flexible work option. Staff members covered by collective bargaining agreements may have benefits different from those described here: refer to the appropriate current agreement for exact entitlements and procedures.

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## Related Documents

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These documents are available on the Human Resources website

[Alternative Work Site Guidelines](#)  
[Screening Questions for Employees](#)  
[Screening Questions for Managers](#)  
[Proposal for a Flexible Work Option \(HR 201\)](#)  
[Flexible Work Option Agreement \(HR 202\)](#)  
[Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)  
[Examples of Different Flexible Work Arrangements](#)

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## Scope

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- A. Formal, flexible work arrangements as described below do not replace temporary adjustments of an employee's schedule that, on occasion, arise in the workplace such as, an employee taking an eight week class on Tuesdays or rearranging their schedule for a doctors appointment. Neither this policy nor any formalized flexible work arrangement can supersede or contradict the terms and conditions of any union contracts and/or the appropriate administration and use of vacation and sick leave accruals as defined by the UMMS policy.
- B. An employee may submit a Proposal for a Flexible Work Option (HR 201) with his or her manager. The manager will review the proposal and in consultation with Human Resources and/or the Work-Life Manager, make a decision. Managers need the written approval of the appropriate department head prior to the implementation of a flexible work arrangement. Managers may submit an application for a flexible work option for an entire unit, department, division or work location.
- C. The flexible work arrangements available to eligible employees under this policy are:
  - Flextime. This refers to changing a work schedule that permits an employee to change start/end times within certain limits established by the employees department.
  - Compressed Work Week. This refers to working a standard 40 hour work week in fewer than five days.
  - Alternative Work Site. This refers to the employee working at a location other than one owned or operated by the Medical School. \*  
\*Before a manager can approve any Alternative Work Site proposal, they must have completed the "Manager's Training for Flexibility". Alternatively, they may hold an individual consult with the UMMS Work-Life Manager. This will ensure that the employee's manager considers any additional costs and/or accommodations that the proposal might include.
  - Reduced hours/Part-time. This refers to the practice of decreasing the number of regular hours worked to less than a full-time position. Reducing hours worked may affect salary, benefit levels and accrual rates of vacation, sick and holiday leave.

- D. All approved flexible work proposals must contain an initial trial period of between three to six months and, thereafter a schedule of periodic review of the flexible work arrangement is required. At the end of the trial period the manager and the employee shall assess if the arrangement will continue. The manager shall solicit input from the employee's clients, customers and co-workers prior to making this determination. The employee, manager and Department Head need to sign the Flexible Work Option Agreement (HR 202) before it is implemented.
- E. A decision to grant a flexible work arrangement will include a review of the employee's performance.
- F. The flexible work arrangement must be evaluated for economic feasibility.
- G. If a work related injury occurs while an employee is working at a site not owned by UMMS, all workers compensation laws and rules will apply.
- H. A flexible work arrangement may be terminated by either UMASS Medical School or the employee, at any time, with appropriate notice. Appropriate notice is, absent compelling reasons, at least two full payroll periods. Please note that an employee who reduces hours from full time to part time may no longer have the option to return to his/her original schedule.

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## Responsibilities

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### Employee

An employee who requests a flexible work arrangement must complete and file with his/her manager the *Proposal for a Flexible Work Option*. The request must include a description of the flexible work option requested; how the option will permit the employee to either continue to perform all of her/his job responsibilities or improve his/her ability to perform all job responsibilities; and, how long the flexible work option will last. In no event will any flexible work option be approved for more than one year at a time.

The employee must meet with his/her manager and be prepared to answer any questions or address the concerns the manager may have about how the proposed flexible work option will affect the employee's job, work unit, customers, etc.

### Manager

With consultation and guidance from Human Resources managers must decide whether or not to grant a flexible work option and thereafter monitor the flexible work option to ensure that the option is meeting the needs of the Medical School. In making a decision to grant a flexible work option the manager must: determine if the employee will be able to continue or improve his/her productivity; consider the impact the flexible work option will have on the operation of his/her department; and whether the nature of the employee's position precludes any flexible work option. Human Resource Consultants and/or the Work-Life Manager will provide advice, support and information to help the manager make an informed and equitable decision. All managers must, with the assistance of Human Resources, implement and administer this policy.

The manager, during the trial period and thereafter must be able

to both measure an employee's productivity and to assess the impact of the flexible work option on the work of his/her department.

**Work-Life Manager**

The Work-Life manager will be responsible for training both employees and managers on their respective responsibilities and roles under this policy. The Work-Life Manager will also act as a resource to assist managers in the administration of this policy.

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## Procedures

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In support of this policy, the following procedures are included:

- A. An employee files the proposal form, *Proposal for a Flexible Work Option*, with his/her manager. The employee must also file a copy with the Work-Life Manager or the HR Consultant. Alternatively a manager may file a unit-wide application for a flexible work option with the manager's immediate supervisor and submit a copy to the Work-Life Manager.
  - o The manager (or in the event of a unit-wide request the appropriate Department Head and Vice Chancellor) will respond within two weeks to the request for a flexible work option.
- B. The manager (or in the event of a unit-wide request the appropriate Department Head and Vice Chancellor) will issue the approval or lack of approval on the *Proposal for a Flexible Work Option* form.
- C. Once the manager has made a decision, he or she will obtain the Department Head's written approval on the *Proposal*.
- D. If approved, the employee and manager will then complete the *Flexible Work Option Agreement*.
- E. *If it is not approved, the manager will attach a copy of the written reasons why not approved to the Proposal for a Flexible Work Option form.*
- F. A copy of the *Proposal, the Agreement Forms and/or any written reasons why it was not approved*, will be given to the employee and shall be sent to the Work-Life Manager or the HR Consultant. A copy of the *Application and the Agreement* or reasons for lack of approval will be put in the employee's personnel record.
- G. If the employee will be using any UMMS equipment at an alternative work site, a Property Pass Form, obtained through Asset Management, must be completed and retained as required on the form.

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## Definitions

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- Flextime** This refers to changing a work schedule that permits an employee to change start/end times within certain limits established by the employees department.
- Compressed Work Week** This refers to working a standard 40 hour work week in fewer than five days.
- Alternative Work Site/Telecommuting** This refers to the employee working at a location other than one owned or operated by the Medical School
- Reduced hours/Part-time** This refers to the practice of decreasing the number of regular hours worked to less than a full-time position. Reducing hours worked may affect salary, benefit levels and accrual rates of vacation, sick and holiday leave.

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## **Approvals**

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Associate Vice Chancellor  
Human Resources

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Date

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Vice Chancellor Operations

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Date

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## Forms / Instructions

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In support of this policy, the following forms are included:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Number</b>
Proposal for a Flexible Work Option	HR 201
Flexible Work Option Agreement	HR 202

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## Appendices

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In support of this policy, the following appendices are included:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Number</b>
NONE	